



Teaching Children about the Food Groups: Grains/Breads

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend choosing a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Talking about what foods in each food group do in the body can get children excited about trying new foods. This issue will focus on how to teach children about the grains/breads food group.

Grains/breads provide important nutrients.

- The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that at least half of the grains we consume be whole grains.
- Whole wheat and other whole grains are higher in fiber and other nutrients than refined grains, such as white flour. Refined grains are made by removing the bran and germ of the grain kernel.
- Enriched breads have some of the nutrients added back that are lost in the refining process.
- Serve a variety of whole grain breads and other grains to expose children to the taste and texture of whole grains. Older children can learn to identify whole grains in their meals.



Grains/Breads Teaching Points

- Breads, rice, cereal, pasta, oats, waffles, and pancakes belong to the grains/breads food group.
- Ask the children to identify the grain or bread item in their breakfast, lunch, and snack for one day.
- Tell children that grains and breads give them energy.

- Many breads and cereals are made from wheat flour. Show children a picture of a wheat field to show how wheat grows.

Food Activity: Making Mini Pizzas

Ingredients for each child:

- Half of a whole grain English muffin
 - 2 tsp tomato sauce
 - 2 tsp grated parmesan cheese
 - 1 slice mozzarella or cheddar cheese
 - 3 mushroom slices
 - 5 pieces diced green peppers
1. Instruct each child to take an English muffin half and choose ingredients to place on top of the muffin.
 2. After children have made their pizzas, help them to place their pizzas on a cookie sheet.
 3. Bake 15-20 minutes at 250 °F or 10 minutes at 400 °F.
 4. Ask children to identify the food groups represented in the pizza.

Book List

- *Pancakes, Pancakes!* by Eric Carle
- *Bread and Jam for Frances* by Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban
- *From Wheat to Bread* by Kristin Thoennes Keller
- *Everybody Cooks Rice* by Norah Dooley



Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

Baked Whole Wheat Doughnuts A-07¹

Frozen whole eggs, thawed OR	½ cup	Baking powder	2 tsp
Fresh large eggs	3 each	Baking soda	1 tsp
Brown sugar, packed	¾ cup	Ground cinnamon	¼ tsp
Honey	¼ cup	Ground ginger	¼ tsp
Lowfat plain yogurt	½ cup	Ground cloves	¼ tsp
Vegetable oil	¼ cup	Sugar	½ cup
Enriched all-purpose flour	2 ¾ cups	Ground cinnamon	1 ½ tsp
Whole wheat flour	1 cup		

In a bowl, whisk eggs until foamy. Add brown sugar, honey, yogurt, and oil to eggs and whisk to combine. Combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves in a separate bowl. Sift dry ingredients into egg mixture, 1 cup at a time. Stir lightly after each addition until a soft dough is formed. Cover with plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. On a well-floured surface, roll out dough to a ½" thickness. Cut doughnuts with a floured doughnut cutter. Combine unused dough and continue process until all dough is used. Coat two half-sheet pans (13" x 18" x 1") with pan release spray and line with paper. Place doughnuts 3 across and 4 down onto each pan. Spray tops of doughnuts lightly with pan release spray. Topping: Combine sugar and cinnamon in a shaker. Sprinkle tops of doughnuts evenly with sugar mixture. Bake until lightly browned. Conventional oven: 350 °F for 6-8 minutes; convection oven: 300 °F for 6-8 minutes.

Number of servings: 24

Serving size: 1 doughnut provides the equivalent of 1 ¼ slices of bread.

¹USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at www.nfsmi.org.

Lunch Menus

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Grilled chicken slices Potatoes with Vegetables- I-01A ¹ Steamed broccoli Cornbread Milk	Meat Lasagna- D-19 ¹ Green salad Apple slices Milk	Tuna salad sandwich Red grapes cut in half lengthwise Carrot sticks with peanut butter ² Milk	Chicken and Noodles- D-17 ¹ Steamed spinach Sweet potato wedges Milk	Mexican Pizza- D-13 ¹ Mexicali Corn- I-15 ¹ Diced apricots Milk

¹USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at www.nfsmi.org.

²Sunflower seed butter can be substituted for peanut butter.

Sources:

National Food Service Management Institute. (2004). *More than mudpies: A nutrition curriculum guide for preschool children* (4th ed). University, MS: Author.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Nutrition Service, & National Food Service Management Institute. (2005). *USDA Recipes for Child Care*. Retrieved January 11, 2008, from <http://www.nfsmi.org>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2005, January). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* (6th ed). Retrieved January 30, 2008, from www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines

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